

PRINCIPAL TRIBAL COURT ADVOCATE

DEFINITION: Under general direction, performs advance legal work that are of considerable difficulty; serves as legal counsel on matters which are of such scope, normally requiring the concentrated effort of several attorneys/advocates to aid in the closure of such subject matter; this series covers a variety of positions that are engaged in the more advance legal profession but is less than that represented by graduation from a recognized law school; legal assignments are reviewed through consultation for progress and adherence to legal procedures; performs related work as assigned.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: This list is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY and is not a comprehensive listing of all functions and tasks performed by incumbents of this class.

TASKS:

Performs advance legal research and analysis of the impact of legislative developments and/or judicial decisions and rulings that are of significant depth and difficulty; provides expert legal assistance and advice to assigned divisions of the Navajo Nation government; serves as the primary legal defense counsel for individuals charged with various criminal offenses; serves as the principal representative in civil court proceedings where guardianship, conservatorship, wills, abuse, etc. constitute the majority of work; performs substantive legal analysis requiring discretion and independent judgment in the application of applicable laws, case decisions, policies, etc.; handles highly complex court cases assigned by the Attorney General or the District Courts of the Navajo Nation; drafts briefs, memoranda, resolutions, pleadings and files legal motions and other litigation papers and/or documents; argues point of law; develops and compiles defense information on appellate hearings; argues case before appellate tribunal and in administrative proceedings.

Provides opinions on federal laws and legislative proposals that may impact the Navajo Nation; works in a close functional relationship with other legal entities who may provide technical guidance where legal professionals are absent in the employing office; makes court related appearance on behalf of assigned divisions; legal assistance rendered may involve various functional areas of law, such as: contract issues, environmental related issues, personnel/labor disputes of a highly complex nature, child support enforcement, taxes, community development, etc.; provides legal advice in response to inquiries regarding a wide range of legal issues; prepares required reports.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:

Knowledge of Navajo Nation laws, and applicable state and federal statutes, rules and regulations of assigned legal area.

Knowledge of the principles of accounting, bookkeeping, records, file and case management.

Knowledge of the principles, practices and methods of legal research.

Knowledge of the principles of gathering evidentiary information, documents, financial records and other data that may be used in court.

Knowledge of court processes, administrative law processes and legal terminology.

Knowledge of legal strategies, their development and presentation.

Skill in undertaking extensive and thorough legal research.

Skill in effectively assessing, interpreting and applying complex laws to information, evidence and other data compiled.

Skill in assessing, analyzing and assessing financial and other records to make recommendations for subsequent appropriate action.

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Skill in communicating effectively and providing legal representation in a court or appellate proceeding and/or in rendering legal assistance to divisions, departments and programs.

Skill in operating a personal computer utilizing a variety of software applications.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT: Work requires sitting at a desk and driving a motor vehicle. Work also involves the potential for high stress levels.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- A Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, Law, Pre-law, Criminology or a closely related field; and five (5) years of experience representing clients before Navajo Nation courts or administrative tribunals.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Licensure with the Navajo Nation Bar Association for at least six (6) years with at least six (6) years of experience representing clients before Navajo Nation Courts or administrative tribunals.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be a member of the Navajo Nation Bar Association and must be in strict conformance with professional and ethical standards.

Depending upon the needs of the Nation, some incumbents of the class may be required to demonstrate fluency in both the Navajo and English languages as a condition of employment.